

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:711
ANSWERED ON:27.11.2006
KEY ISSUES UNDER PDS
Chitthan Shri N.S.V.

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the key issues like identification of beneficiaries, viability of fair price shops and effective monitoring have been identified under Public Distribution System (PDS);
- (b) if so, the details in this regard; and
- (c) the steps being taken for continuous monitoring of the PDS?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH)

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. PDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments. The Central Government has taken the responsibility for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of foodgrains, etc. The responsibility for effectively distributing the same to the consumers through the network of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) lies with the State Governments. The operational responsibilities including allocation within the State, identification of families below poverty line, issue of ration cards, supervision and monitoring the functioning of FPSs rest with the State Governments.

In order to maintain supplies and securing availability and distribution of essential commodities, Public Distribution System (Control) Order 2001 has been notified on August 31, 2001. The Order mainly contains provisions with regard to the following issues:-

- (i) Identification of families below the poverty line;
- (ii) Rations cards;
- (iii) Scale and issue price;
- (iv) Distribution of foodgrains;
- (v) Licensing;
- (vi) Monitoring;
- (vii) Constitution of Vigilance Committees involving members of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

The Order requires all State Governments/UTs to ensure that the BPL and Antyodaya families identified are really the poorest of the poor. It also requires the State Governments/UTs to get the lists of BPL and Antyodaya families reviewed every year for the purpose of deletion of ineligible families and inclusion of eligible families. It further devolves on the State Governments/UTs to conduct periodical checking of ration cards to weed out ineligible and bogus ration cards. The State Governments/UTs are also to ensure issue of Utilization Certificates confirming that the foodgrains have been lifted and distributed to the intended beneficiaries under the TPDS. An offence committed in violation of the provisions of this Order shall invoke criminal liability under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

(c): For continuous monitoring of the Public Distribution System (PDS), Government of India monitors on monthly basis the allocation and offtake of foodgrains made to the State Governments under the TPDS. To ensure correct distribution of foodgrains, the State Governments are also submitting information as required under the PDS (Control) Order. At the State level, monitoring of PDS is being done by the respective State Governments through a system of continuous inspections of Fair Price Shops (FPS) to ensure that there are no leakages/diversions. Instructions have been issued by the Government of India to set up Vigilance Committees at the Fair Price Shop/Block/District and State Levels to continuously monitor the distribution of foodgrains under the PDS. Government of India has also been holding National/Regional level Conferences with the State Food Ministers and Food Secretaries to ensure smooth working of the PDS.